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There are many attempts in these days to popularize the modern view of the Bible. The substance of Mrs. Houghton's book¹⁹ has been given many times as popular lectures, and is now, in a revised form, first put into permanent form. It is very evident from the beginning that the authoress has done wide reading, though not as much up-to-date as one should wish. Some of the themes of her chapters indicate the scope of her treatment. "The Day-Book of the Most High;" "Folklore in the Old Testament;" "The Poetry of the Old Testament;" "Heroes and Heroism;" "Eastern Light on the Story of Elisha;" "Love-Stories of Israel;" "A Parable of Divine Love;" and "Secular Faith." The discussions of these and the remaining themes of the book are not such as convey to the reader an entirely satisfying idea of "Hebrew life and thought." They are rather a congeries of disconnected lectures on themes related to the Old Testament. One is disappointed that he finds no attempt at the unity of purpose, except to entertain the reader, indicated in the title of the book. We are glad to find that each lecture has a definite purpose, and some of them are admirably treated. But the reader is not carried along through successive chapters until he gains a full and rounded conception of the life and thought that was prevalent in the Old Testament. Whatever views one finds of the Old Testament they are fairly up-to-date, modern and sane. We can see how, when presented as individual lectures, the writer could have been entertaining and successful.

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THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT DISCUSSIONS

The books to be dealt with in this article¹ exemplify a very noteworthy phenomenon in the province of New Testament science—the extraordinary

¹⁹ *Hebrew Life and Thought: Being Interpretative Studies in the Literature of Israel.* By Louise Seymour Houghton. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906. xi+386 pages. \$1.50.

¹ *Von Reimarus zu Wrede: Eine Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung.* Von A. Schweitzer. Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1906. xii+418 pages. M. 8.

Die Hauptprobleme der Leben-Jesu-Forschung. Von O. Schmiedel. Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1906. viii+124 pages. M. 1.20.

The Prophet of Nazareth. By Nathaniel Schmidt. New York: Macmillan, 1905. xii+422 pages. \$2.50.

Jesus und das Saccæenopfer. Von H. Vollmer. Giessen: Töpelmann, 1905. 32 pages. M. .60.

The Authority of Christ. By D. W. Forrest. Edinburgh: Clark, 1906; New York: Scribner. xvii+437 pages. \$2 net.

activity which is being devoted to investigation of the life of Jesus. Within the past two or three years the scholars of Germany have been specially prominent in this department of research. Their efforts have not been confined to elaborate, scientific treatises. Far more common has been the short, graphic outline, intended to present to the laity the most recent results of historical criticism in a terse and attractive form. The larger works of Oscar Holtzmann and P. W. Schmidt; the more popular sketches by Bousset, von Soden, Weinel, Hess, and others; the cognate studies of Baldensperger, J. Weiss, Lietzmann, Wernle, Brandt, Wellhausen, Wrede, Pfleiderer, and Arnold Meyer, have followed one another with bewildering rapidity. Examination of the sources is indissolubly linked together with scrutiny of the self-consciousness of Jesus.

What is the meaning of this eager expenditure of energy? Schweitzer somewhat cruelly suggests that the adherents of the method of "literary criticism" as applied to the interpretation of Jesus have reached a point ("konsequenter Skeptizismus") beyond which they cannot advance a step. Hence their tendency to "inordinate popularizing" (p. 328). Whether there is any truth in this hypothesis or not, at least the writers in question show a true scientific instinct in concentrating their attention on the central problem of the New Testament. A problem we say, advisedly, for, as Dr. Forrest aptly expresses it, inasmuch as the disclosure of God's redemptive purpose and action, "while valid for all time, has been made in a Historic Life correlated to the environment of a particular age, the eternal truth embodied in Christ is perpetually undergoing reinterpretation under the changing conditions of humanity" (p. 430). If we can reach any solid certainty in this sphere of inquiry, other crucial New Testament questions will inevitably fall into line.

Where, then, is investigation to begin? Was there ever such a person as the Jesus of the gospels? This may appear at the first glance a preposterous question to ask, but it is seriously discussed and answered in the negative by A. Kalthoff, a pastor in Bremen, whose works on Christ and Christianity (published in 1902 and 1904) have roused keen discussion in Germany. Kalthoff argues that the early Christian communities owed their origin to the contact of socialistic movements among the masses in the Roman Empire with Jewish messianic expectations. "The history of Jesus in the gospels is only the history of the origin of the Christ-idea, i. e., the history of the developing community" (see Schweitzer, pp. 312 f.; Schmiedel, p. 107). We may smile at this crude hypothesis, but no wide interval separates it from positions which are treated quite seriously by representative scholars—positions such as that of W. Brandt, who holds

that the only absolutely certain information as to the life of Jesus is that which states that he died and was supposed to have risen from the grave (Schweitzer, p. 255). Schweitzer himself, at the close of his masterly survey of more than a century's research on the life of Jesus, affirms with calm deliberation that "the historical Jesus will be for our age a stranger or a puzzle" (p. 397). An inexplicable puzzle, truly, if we were compelled to give our adherence to some modern "interpretations" of his person and career. When, e. g., Professor N. Schmidt describes him as "a philosophical anarchist" (p. 303), when he warns the reader, who may not be "accustomed to compare texts, eliminate interpolations, sift evidence, or test the value of translations," against the impression he may gain "from late additions to the Synoptic Gospels, or early misinterpretations by the authors of these works, that Jesus on some occasions (!) placed himself far above his fellow-men" (p. 294), the most unbiased mind must be conscious that this Jesus is so different from the Jesus of the New Testament that it seems scarcely worth while to waste time on his life at all. Indeed, this was the conclusion—in our judgment a perfectly logical one—at which some of Professor Schmidt's literary predecessors finally arrived. Bruno Bauer, for example, whom Schweitzer regards, with justice, as the founder of that school of gospel-criticism represented in our time by Brandt, Wrede, and Schmidt, etc., became so absorbed in the task of emancipating the world from "that Roman-Jewish idol, Jesus Christ," that ultimately the existence of a historic Jesus came to be for him a matter of complete indifference (p. 157). In his latest work, Strauss, the most epoch-making name in the negative criticism of the gospels, in reply to the question, "Are we still Christians?" answers, "No." The process and its result are significant.

But we must attempt, very briefly, to examine some of the most characteristic elements in that process of theoretical construction of the life of Jesus which has made possible such extreme positions as have been referred to above. The material for such an examination is set before us with generous fulness in Schweitzer's *Von Reimarus zu Wrede* and O. Schmiedel's *Hauptprobleme der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*. Both works, it may be said at once, are admirably planned and admirably written. That of Schmiedel is the expansion of a popular lecture. But there is nothing superficial in his treatment. After rapidly sketching the history of the subject, the author turns directly to the sources. In his treatment of them he occupies a position more or less akin to that of his brother, P. W. Schmiedel, H. J. Holtzmann, and others. Early in the book he has the usual contemptuous fling of the radical school at "mediating"

standpoints (p. 4). Surely this is fundamentally a most unscientific type of criticism. In most departments of investigation the truth is actually found to lie between the extreme hypotheses on either side. Typical of Schmiedel's estimate of the gospels is his criticism of the grouping of narratives in Mark. This grouping, he argues, has no regard to chronology, "which is decisive in pure narrative." One might ask in passing what "pure" narrative means. None of the world's most impressive narratives has ever been a mere chronicle of sequences. It must be interpretative. But Mark's arrangement of incidents is disparaged because it is intended to "*teach* something" (p. 33). As if the life of Jesus could ever be delineated without "teaching something." Similarly, readers are warned that in the gospels they have before them the life of a Redeemer, the life of the Messiah. "The early church in whose circles the narratives of the life of Jesus originated. . . . was at one in its acknowledgment of Christ, its exalted Lord. . . . Thus the halo of glorification was cast back . . . from their faith in his resurrection and exaltation . . . upon his earlier Galilean activity" (p. 35). But whence did this unanimous acknowledgment of Jesus as Messiah and exalted Lord proceed? It was already in full activity a few years after the crucifixion. There must have been some adequate cause for it. Some altogether marvelous impression must have lain behind it. The story of Jesus could never have been written *in vacuo*. The reason it was written at all was that his most intimate companions actually found in him their Redeemer, the Christ of God. The gospels must be scrutinized by historical criticism. But let it *be* historical, and not the arbitrary assumption of an individual or a school. It is high time to protest, in the name of science, against the practice, almost universal with some scholars who deny the designation "scientific" to any save themselves and their allies, of first constructing the life of Jesus ("*pure* narrative," perhaps), and then forcing this construction upon the text of the gospels. It is almost surprising, after much detailed criticism of the type of which we have given examples, to find the following important admission as to the oldest sources (*Urm Markus* and *Logia*): "It is the unanimous view of most scholars that we may really trust them, that especially the course of Jesus' life exhibited by the Gospel of Mark corresponds with his historical career" (p. 40). In the same spirit as this admission are the closing words of a very suggestive outline of the history of Jesus, in which Schmiedel accounts for the varying conceptions of him by saying: "The person of Jesus is so great and surpasses the ordinary human standard to such an extent that no age and no conception is comprehensive enough to exhaust his complete

significance for the history of the world" (p. 104). However subjective may be the canons of criticism, an investigator of moral sensibility cannot evade the overpowering impression of the story which he has scrutinized.

Schweitzer has conceived the very happy idea of writing a history of the investigation of the life of Jesus, from Reimarus, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, to Wrede, at the beginning of the twentieth. The result is a work of unusual interest and importance. A complete master of the huge mass of material to be handled, he has traced the development of research in his chosen province with true insight and laborious thoroughness. Peculiarly luminous and instructive is his treatment of D. F. Strauss and his *Leben Jesu* (pp. 67-119). One could scarcely imagine a more penetrating estimate of his significance for subsequent gospel-criticism. Unfortunately for the balance and proportion of the book, Schweitzer is an uncompromising advocate of the theory, chiefly associated with the name of Johannes Weiss, according to which Jesus, throughout his career, regarded the kingdom of God and the functions of the Messiah *exclusively* from the standpoint of eschatology. This "tremendous one-sidedness" (to quote Holtzmann's phrase) is Schweitzer's unflinching criterion of the value of those many phases which research into the life of Jesus has assumed. Hence he concludes, as the result of an elaborate discussion, which he would probably regard as the most important section of the volume (pp. 327-95), that two alternatives finally emerge from the long history of investigation which he has described. These represent the only schools of criticism which seem to him worthy of consideration. The one is the literary-critical school, whose culminating product is Wrede's *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*. The other is the eschatological-historical, represented by Schweitzer's own *Das Messianitäts-und Leidensgeheimnis*. The outcome of the former is skepticism; of the latter, pure eschatology. Between these alternatives we have to decide (chap. xix, *passim*).

How has this extraordinary dilemma been reached? Schweitzer clearly shows that modern "liberal" constructions of the life of Jesus rest fundamentally on the position taken by Bruno Bauer as far back as 1841. For the "mythical" theory of Strauss he substituted that of the church-consciousness. The gospels are not history, but the deposit of Christian reflection having as its source faith in the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus. Bauer endeavored to prove that events like the temptation, the sending-forth of the Twelve, the Last Supper, etc., were simply experiences of the Christian community read back into the life of Jesus. Obviously, there need be no limits to so subjective a theory as

this. Its logical issue will be complete negation, as it was in B. Bauer's own case. This issue was averted, pre-eminently by the labors of Holtzmann, who, following to a large extent the lines suggested by Weiss (twenty-five years earlier), sought to deduce an organic development of the career of Jesus from the Gospel of Mark as the earliest source. The attempt was, of course, made in close association with an exhaustive investigation of the synoptic problem. But there has been a reaction toward B. Bauer. According to Brandt, Mark is almost entirely a poetical creation (Schweitzer, p. 255). Pfleiderer asserts that Mark and the other synoptists stand on the same footing as the Gospel of John. The difference is merely one of degree. They simply embody different strata of theological reflection (*op. cit.*, p. 311). Wrede carries the radical criticism of Mark to its extreme issue. This gospel arose, he urges, from the impulse to give the earthly life of Jesus a messianic guise (*op. cit.*, pp. 335-45).

How are such theories to be tested? As a matter of fact, all but the most arbitrary scholars are willing to admit a number of remarkable sayings as well as many self-evidently authentic deeds and situations in the narrated life of Jesus. There are many even of the most radical school who would hesitate to accept some of the criteria laid down by Professor Schmidt; e. g.: "The best evidence that he actually wrought some cures is the early tradition, still preserved in our gospels, that he sometimes did not succeed at all" (p. 265); or again: "these sayings [viz., some words of Jesus of which Schmidt has given the most perverse interpretation] possess evidential value just in proportion as they contradict the notions current in the circles through which they were transmitted" (p. 235). As if the influences which dominated these circles were not precisely the influence of Jesus. What light have the earliest Christian documents to shed on the data of the gospels? Here comes in the invaluable evidence of the Pauline epistles. Schmidt's preposterous criticism of these letters might well be passed over in silence, were it not for one audacious statement which we scarcely know how to characterize. He says: "The most burning question in New Testament isagogics at the present time concerns the genuineness of the four epistles, Galatians, I and II Corinthians, and Romans" (p. 196). Probably there is no New Testament scholar of repute at the present time who would not assent to Lipsius' verdict on the arguments used to discredit these epistles: "sheer assertions," he calls them, "which, on the one hand, have no foundation in fact, and, on the other, lack all demonstrative force." Even if we had no other literature belonging to the apostolic age, the testimony of these four epistles would be sufficient to show that the impression which Paul has of

Jesus is identical with that made upon the disciples, as reported in the gospel narratives. There is no more assured result of recent investigation of the apostolic age than that Paul was in agreement with the Jerusalem apostles on the fundamental facts of the faith. Now, pre-eminent among these facts is the unique and solitary position of Jesus in the divine purpose for humanity. For Paul and the whole early church Jesus is the Christ, risen from the dead and exalted as Lord. How has this attitude been reached? Obviously, in the case of his immediate disciples, contact with the personality of Jesus must in large measure have accounted for it. But the outline in the Synoptic Gospels leads us farther. There we are brought face to face with Jesus' consciousness of his own functions, his messianic self-consciousness. In this connection, much, although by no means everything, turns on the interpretation of his own self-designation, "Son of Man." Schmidt's *Prophet of Nazareth* is an attempt, he tells us, at a reinterpretation of the life and teaching of Jesus in the light of the conviction that "Jesus never used this term concerning himself, either to claim messiahship in any sense, or to hint that he was 'a mere man,' or 'the true man,' but in some pregnant utterances used it in reference to 'man' in general, his duties, rights, and privileges" (p. vii). It is difficult to take Schmidt's arguments seriously. We cannot pause here to point out the precariousness of basing the decision upon the supposed Aramaic original. It is sufficient to refer to the excellent discussion in Dalman's *Worte Jesu*. Here is Schmidt's exegesis of Matt. 8:20, which may serve as a sample of his results: "The foxes have holes and the birds of the heavens nests, but *bar nasha*—i. e., man—has nowhere to lay his head. Man's life is full of danger and uncertainty. . . . The beast is not deprived of home and hearth by his convictions" (p. 111). The title is too firmly woven into the texture of the gospel narrative to admit of this easy elimination. It occurs in connections which suggest pre-eminently Jesus' official functions. Very soon it must have come to be associated with the founding and guiding of the kingdom of God. And such an association had been foreshadowed by the famous passage in Daniel (7:13-14), and later by the *Similitudes of Enoch*. Plainly it held up a messianic ideal largely divergent from current views. With reference to these erroneous ideas "it served," as Bruce has put it, "the purpose of an incognito, making it possible for Jesus to declare himself to be the Christ to those who were in the secret, and yet remain an outside stranger to the outside world" (*Kingdom of God*, p. 177). It is Schweitzer's merit fully to recognize that "his messianic self-consciousness flashes out everywhere from his words and deeds" (p. 369). His fatal error is

the theory that this self-consciousness "can only be explained by means of eschatology" (p. 364). All attempts at an organic construction of the life of Jesus from the standpoint of a spiritual interpretation of his messianic self-consciousness are denounced as "psychologizing" (e. g., pp. 219, 244, 247). As a matter of fact, the materials for this interpretation confront us in the gospels. Eschatological elements, of course, exist. They were the scaffolding, so to speak, of the messianic hope which Jesus discovered to be realized in himself. But in virtue of his unique relationship to God, that filial relationship realized in the most intimate spiritual communion, Jesus must inevitably transform the religious conceptions of his time.

We have no space to devote to the central question of the sinlessness of Jesus as estimated by the writers with whom we have dealt. Characteristic of the most recent of them is their apparent reluctance to make negative pronouncements on the subject. Dr. Forrest, whose book on *The Authority of Christ* offers an exceedingly able treatment of an all-important theme, puts the case convincingly when he says:

Any man of ordinary intelligence and of honest moral perceptions has, if he will, the power of recognizing that such a one as Jesus could not refrain from confessing sin, if he felt he had any to confess; that such confession, if it occurred at all, affecting as it must his whole tone and attitude toward God and man, must have been known to the disciples; that if they knew of it, it was morally impossible for them to speak of him afterwards as the sinless one and the Lord of glory; and that therefore no rational account can be given of the gospels as we have them, unless on the hypothesis that the personality they depict was actually free from sin. (P. 28.)

A perusal of recent studies of the life of Jesus is an instructive discipline in the estimating of critical theories. Few of them, indeed, can be accused of the baseless extravagances which appear on the pages of Professor Schmidt. And yet to many the criticism of Kalthoff is strictly relevant: "Jesus," he says, "has become for Protestant theology the vessel into which each theologian pours the contents of his own thought" (Schweitzer, p. 313).

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ABBOTT'S JOHANNINE GRAMMAR

This bulky volume¹ is the sixth part of Dr. Abbott's *Diatessarica*, a work which up to the present demands an outlay of some twenty dollars,

¹ *Johannine Grammar*. By Edwin A. Abbott. London: Black; New York: Macmillan, 1906. xxvii + 687 pages. 16s. 6d. net.